

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 01092835 6

PR
3533
A3
1805



E. Gurney

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE

OF

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON,

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS ELEVENTH YEAR,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

ORIGINAL LETTERS

TO

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON,

BY MISS HILL BOOTHBY:

From the MSS. preserved by the Doctor; and now in Possession of RICHARD WRIGHT, Surgeon; Proprietor of the Museum of Antiquities, Natural and Artificial Curiosities, &c. Lichfield.

London:

PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS,
No. 6, BRIDGE-STREET, BLACKFRIARS;

By NICHOLS and SON, Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street.

1805.

433688
24.3.45

PR
3533
A3
1805

P R E F A C E.

IT will be expected, that the Editor of the following curious and interesting pages should give an account of the manner in which the original MSS. came into his possession.

Mr. Boswell, in his admirable *Life of Dr. Johnson*, thus observes * :

“ The consideration of the numerous papers of which he was possessed seems to have struck Johnson’s

* Vol. II. p. 573, 4to edition.

mind with a sudden anxiety ; and, as they were in great confusion, it is much to be lamented that he had not intrusted some faithful and discreet person with the care and selection of them ; instead of which, he, in a precipitate manner, burnt masses of them, as I should apprehend, with little regard to discrimination.

Two very valuable articles, I am sure, we have lost ; which were two quarto volumes, containing a full, fair, and most particular account of his own life, from his earliest recollection.”

It does not appear, that the MS. from which the following short account of Dr. Johnson's early life is copied, was one of the two volumes

to which Boswell alludes; although it is evident, from his enumeration of particular dates in the blank pages of the book, that he intended to have finished these Annals, according to this plan, with the same minuteness of description, in every circumstance and event.

This Volume was among that mass of papers which were ordered to be committed to the flames a few days before his death, thirty-two pages of which were torn out by himself, and destroyed; the contents of those which remain are here given with fidelity and exactness. Francis Barber, his black servant, unwilling that all the MSS. of his illustrious master should

be utterly lost, preserved these relicks from the flames. By purchase from Barber's widow they came into the possession of the Editor.

Dr. Johnson's acquaintance with Miss Hill Boothby, aunt of Sir Brooke Boothby, commenced at Ashborne, between the years 1737 and 1740, when he was upon a visit at Ashborne to his friend Dr. Taylor. As an evidence of the value which he set upon the Letters that he received from her, he numbered them, wrote the dates upon them, and had them bound together in one volume. His intimacy and correspondence with Miss H. Boothby were uninterruptedly continued till her death.

To say that these Letters do credit to the understanding of that Lady is faint praise. Dr. Johnson himself said of her, that “she had the best understanding he ever met with in any human being *.”

As they betray no family secrets, but contain reflections upon serious and literary subjects, and display with what benevolent ardour Dr. Johnson valued her friendship, they form an interesting and proper appendage to this little tract. The Doctor's Letters to Miss Boothby are printed in Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, and in Boswell's Life of him †.

* Boswell's Life, vol. I. p. 37, 4to.

† A Hebrew Grammar, or the sketch of one, composed for her own use, and written

The original MSS. are deposited in the Museum of Antiquities and Natural Curiosities, belonging to the Editor; which is open to the inspection of the publick.

Lichfield, March 2, 1805.

in a beautiful character, has been preserved by Miss Boothby's family, as a distinguished testimony of her literary attainments.

A N N A L S.

I. 1709-10.

SEPT. 7*, 1709, I was born at Lichfield. My mother had a very difficult and dangerous labour, and was assisted by George Hector, a man-midwife of great reputation. I was born almost dead, and could not cry for some time. When he had me in his arms, he said, "Here is a brave boy †."

* 18, of the present stile. *Orig.*

† This was written in January, 1765. *Edit.*

In a few weeks an inflammation was discovered on my buttock, which was at first, I think, taken for a burn; but soon appeared to be a natural disorder. It swelled, broke, and healed.

My Father being that year Sheriff of Lichfield, and to ride the circuit of the County next day, which was a ceremony then performed with great pomp; he was asked by my mother, "Whom he would invite to the Riding?" and answered, "All the town now." He feasted the citizens with uncommon magnificence, and was the last but one that maintained the splendour of the Riding.

I was, by my father's persuasion, put to one Marclew, commonly called Bellison*, the servant, or wife of a

* The name of Marklew, alias Bellison, is yet common in Lichfield, and is usually so distinguished. *Edit.*

servant of my father, to be nursed in George Lane, where I used to call when I was a bigger boy, and eat fruit in the garden, which was full of trees. Here it was discovered that my eyes were bad; and an issue was cut in my left arm *, of which I took no great notice, as I think my mother has told me, having my little hand in a custard.

It is observable, that, having been told of this operation, I always imagined that I remembered it, but I laid the scene in the wrong house. Such confusions of memory I suspect to be common.

My mother visited me every day, and used to go different ways, that her assiduity might not expose her

* How long this issue was continued I do not remember. I believe it was suffered to dry when I was about six years old. *Orig.*

to ridicule ; and often left her fan or glove behind her, that she might have a pretence to come back unexpected ; but she never discovered any token of neglect. Dr. Swinfen told me, that the scrofulous sores which afflicted me proceeded from the bad humours of the nurse, whose son had the same distemper, and was likewise short-sighted, but both in a less degree. My mother thought my diseases derived from her family.

In ten weeks I was taken home, a poor, diseased infant, almost blind.

I remember my aunt Nath. Ford told me, when I was about . . . years old, that she would not have picked such a poor creature up in the street.

In . . . 67, when I was at Lichfield, I went to look for my nurse's house ; and, inquiring somewhat obscurely, was told " this is the house

in which you were nursed." I saw my nurse's son, to whose milk I succeeded, reading a large Bible, which my nurse had bought, as I was then told, some time before her death.

Dr. Swinfen used to say, that he never knew any child reared with so much difficulty.

2. 1710-II.

In the second year I knew not what happened to me. I believe it was then that my mother carried me to Trysul*, to consult Dr. Atwood, an oculist of Worcester. My father and Mrs. Harriots, I think, never had much kindness for each other. She was my mother's relation; and he had none so high to whom he could send any of his family. He saw her seldom himself, and willingly

* Near Wolverhampton. *Edit.*

disgusted her, by sending his horses from home on Sunday; which she considered, and with reason, as a breach of duty. My father had much vanity, which his adversity hindered from being fully exerted. I remember, that, mentioning her legacy in the humility of distress, he called her *our good Cousin Harriots*. My mother had no value for his relations; those indeed whom we knew of were much lower than hers. This contempt began, I know not on which side, very early: but, as my father was little at home, it had not much effect.

My father and mother had not much happiness from each other. They seldom conversed; for my father could not bear to talk of his affairs; and my mother, being unacquainted with books, cared not to talk of any thing else. Had my mo-

ther been more literate, they had been better companions. She might have sometimes introduced her unwelcome topick with more success; if she could have diversified her conversation. Of business she had no distinct conception; and therefore her discourse was composed only of complaint, fear, and suspicion. Neither of them ever tried to calculate the profits of trade, or the expenses of living. My mother concluded that we were poor, because we lost by some of our trades; but the truth was, that my father, having in the early part of his life contracted debts, never had trade sufficient to enable him to pay them, and maintain his family; he got something, but not enough.

It was not till about 1768, that I thought to calculate the returns of

my father's trade, and by that estimate his probable profits. This, I believe, my parents never did.

3. 1711-12.

This year, in Lent — 12, I was taken to London, to be touched for the evil by Queen Anne. My mother was at Nicholson's, the famous bookseller, in Little Britain*. I always retained some memory of this journey, though I was then but thirty months old. I remembered a little dark room behind the kitchen, where the jack-weight fell through a hole in the floor, into which I once slipped my leg †.

* My mother, then with child, concealed her pregnancy, that she might not be hindered from the journey. *Orig.*

† I seem to remember, that I played with a string and a bell, which my cousin Isaac Johnson gave me; and that there was a cat

I remember a boy crying at the palace when I went to be touched. Being asked "on which side of the shop was the counter?" I answered, "on the left from the entrance," many years after, and spoke, not by guess, but by memory. We went in the stage-coach, and returned in the waggon, as my mother said, because my cough was violent. The hope of saving a few shillings was no slight motive; for she, not having been accustomed to money, was afraid of such expenses as now seem very small. She sewed two guineas in her petticoat, lest she should be robbed.

We were troublesome to the passengers; but to suffer such inconvenience with a white collar, and a dog, called Chops, that leaped over a stick: but I know not whether I remember the thing, or the talk of it. *Orig.*

veniences in the stage-coach was common in these days to persons in much higher rank *. She bought me a small silver cup and spoon, marked SAM. I. lest if they had been marked S. I. which was her name, they should, upon her death, have been taken from me. She bought me a speckled linen frock, which I knew afterwards by the name of my London frock. The cup was one of the last pieces of plate which dear Tetty sold in our distress. I have now the spoon. She bought at the same time two teaspoons, and till my manhood she had no more.

My father considered tea as very expensive, and discouraged my mother from keeping company with the neighbours, and from paying visits

* I was sick; one woman fondled me, the other was disgusted. *Orig.*

or receiving them. She lived to say, many years after, that, if the time were to pass again, she would not comply with such unsocial injunctions.

I suppose that in this year I was first informed of a future state. I remember, that being in bed with my mother one morning, I was told by her of the two places to which the inhabitants of this world were received after death ; one a fine place filled with happiness, called Heaven ; the other a *sad* place, called Hell. That this account much affected my imagination, I do not remember. When I was risen, my mother bade me repeat what she had told me to Thomas Jackson. When I told this afterwards to my mother, she seemed to wonder that she should begin such

talk so late as that the first time could be remembered.

[*Here there is a chasm of thirty-eight pages in the manuscript.*]

—— “ examination. We always considered it as a day of ease ; for we made no preparation, and indeed were asked commonly such questions as we had been asked often before, and could regularly answer. But I believe it was of use at first.

On Thursday night a small portion of Æsop was learned by heart, and on Friday morning the lessons in Æsop were repeated ; I believe, not those in Helvicus. On Friday afternoon we learned *Quæ Genus* ; I suppose that other boys might say their repetition, but of this I have now no distinct remembrance. To learn *Quæ Genus* was to me always pleasing ;

and *As in Præsenti* was, I know not why, always disgusting.

When we learned our *Accidence* we had no parts, but, I think, two lessons. The boys that came to school untaught read the *Accidence* twice through before they learned it by heart.

When we learned *Propria quæ Maribus*, our parts were in the *Accidence*; when we learned *As in Præsenti*, our parts were in the *Accidence* and *Propria quæ Maribus*; when we learned *Syntaxis*, in the former three. *Propria quæ Maribus* I could repeat without any effort of recollection. I used to repeat it to my mother and Tom Johnson; and remember, that I once went, as far as the middle of the paragraph, “*Mascula dicuntur monosyllaba,*” in a dream.

On Saturday, as on Thursday, we were examined. We were sometimes, on one of those days, asked our Catechism *, but with no regularity or constancy.

The progress of examination was this. When we learned *Propria quæ Manibus*, we were examined in the Accidence; particularly we formed Verbs, that is, went through the same person in all the Moods and Tenses. This was very difficult to me; and I was once very anxious about the next day, when this exercise was to be performed, in which I had failed till I was discouraged. My mother encouraged me, and I proceeded better. When I told her of my good escape, "We often," said she, dear mother! "come off best, when we

* G. Hector never had been taught his Catechism. *Orig.*

are most afraid." She told me, that, once when she asked me about forming verbs, I said, "I did not form them in an ugly shape." "You could not," said she, "speak plain; and I was proud that I had a boy who was forming verbs." These little memorials sooth my mind. Of the parts of Corderius or Æsop, which we learned to repeat, I have not the least recollection, except of a passage in one of the Morals, where it is said of some man, that, when he hated another, he made him rich; this I repeated emphatically in my mother's hearing, who could never conceive that riches could bring any evil. She remarked it, as I expected.

I had the curiosity, two or three years ago, to look over Garretson's Exercises, Willymot's Particles, and Walker's Exercises; and found very

few sentences that I should have recollected if I had found them in any other books. That which is read without pleasure is not often recollected nor infixed by conversation, and therefore in a great measure drops from the memory. Thus it happens that those who are taken early from school, commonly lose all that they had learned.

When we learned *As in Præsenti*, we parsed *Propria quæ Maribus* by Hool's Terminations; and, when we learned *Syntaxis*, we parsed *As in Præsenti*; and afterwards *Quæ Genus*, by the same book; sometimes, as I remember, proceeding in order of the rules, and sometimes, particularly in *As in Præsenti*, taking words as they occurred in the Index.

The whole week before we broke up, and the part of the week in which

we broke up, were spent wholly, I know not why, in examination; and were therefore easy to both us and the master. The two nights before the vacation were free from exercise.

This was the course of the school, which I remember with pleasure; for I was indulged and caressed by my master, and, I think, really excelled the rest.

I was with Hawkins but two years, and perhaps four months. The time, till I had computed it, appeared much longer by the multitude of novelties which it supplied, and of incidents, then in my thoughts important, it produced. Perhaps it is not possible that any other period can make the same impression on the memory.

10. 1719.

In the Spring of 1719, our class consisting of eleven, the number was always fixed in my memory, but one of the names I have forgotten, was removed to the upper school, and put under Holbrook, a peevish and ill-tempered man. We were removed sooner than had been the custom; for the head-master, intent upon his boarders, left the town-boys long in the lower school. Our removal was caused by a reproof from the Town-clerk; and Hawkins complained that he had lost half his profit. At this removal I cried. The rest were indifferent. My exercise in Garretson was somewhere about the Gerunds. Our places in *Æsop* and *Helvicus* I have totally forgotten.

At Whitsuntide Mrs. Longworth brought me a “Hermes Garret-

soni," of which I do not remember that I ever could make much use. It was afterwards lost, or stolen at school. My exercise was then in the end of the Syntax. Hermes furnished me with the word *inliciturus*, which I did not understand, but used it.

This task was very troublesome to me; I made all the twenty-five exercises, others made but sixteen. I never shewed all mine; five lay long after in a drawer in the shop. I made an exercise in a little time, and shewed it my mother; but the task being long upon me, she said, "Though you could make an exercise in so short a time, I thought you would find it difficult to make them all as soon as you should."

This Whitsuntide, I and my brother were sent to pass some time at Bir-

mingham; I believe, a fortnight. Why such boys were sent to trouble other houses, I cannot tell. My mother had some opinion that much improvement was to be had by changing the mode of life. My uncle Harrison was a widower; and his house was kept by Sally Ford, a young woman of such sweetness of temper, that I used to say she had no fault. We lived most at uncle Ford's, being much caressed by my aunt, a good-natured, coarse woman, easy of converse, but willing to find something to censure in the absent. My uncle Harrison did not much like us, nor did we like him. He was a very mean and vulgar man, drunk every night, but drunk with little drink, very peevish, very proud, very ostentatious, but, luckily, not rich. At my aunt Ford's I eat so much of

a boiled leg of mutton, that she used to talk of it. My mother, who had lived in a narrow sphere, and was then affected by little things, told me seriously that it would hardly ever be forgotten. Her mind, I think, was afterwards much enlarged, or greater evils wore out the care of less.

I staid after the vacation was over some days; and remember, when I wrote home, that I desired the horses to come on Thursday of the first school week; and then, and not till then, they should be welcome to go. I was much pleased with a rattle to my whip, and wrote of it to my mother.

When my father came to fetch us home, he told the ostler, that he had twelve miles home, and two boys under his care. This offended me.

He had then a watch, which he returned when he was to pay for it.

In making, I think, the first exercise under Holbrook, I perceived the power of continuity of attention, of application not suffered to wander or to pause. I was writing at the kitchen windows, as I thought, alone, and turning my head saw Sally dancing. I went on without notice, and had finished almost without perceiving that any time had elapsed. This close attention I have seldom in my whole life obtained.

In the upper-school, I first began to point my exercise, which we made noon's business. Of the method I have not so distinct a remembrance as of the foregoing system. On Thursday morning we had a lesson, as on other mornings. On Thursday afternoon, and on Saturday morn-

ing, we commonly made examples to the Syntax.

We were soon raised from Æsop to Phædrus, and then said our repetition on Friday afternoon to Hunter. I remember the fable of the wolf and lamb, *to my draught—that I may drink*. At what time we began Phædrus, I know not. It was the only book which we learned to the end. In the latter part thirty lines were expected for a lesson. What reconciles masters to long lessons is the pleasure of tasking.

Helvicus was very difficult: the dialogue *Vestitus*, Hawkins directed us to omit, as being one of the hardest in the book. As I remember, there was another upon food, and another upon fruits, which we began, and were ordered not to pursue. In the dialogue of Fruits, we perceived

that Holbrook did not know the meaning of *Uvæ Crispæ*. That lesson gave us great trouble. I observed that we learned Helvicus a long time with very little progress. We learned it in the afternoon on Monday and Wednesday.

Gladiolus Scriptorius. — A little lapse, we quitted it. I got an English Erasmus.

In Phædrus we tried to use the interpretation, but never attempted the notes. Nor do I remember that the interpretation helped us.

In Phædrus we were sent up twice to the upper master to be punished. The second time we complained that we could not get the passage. Being told that we should ask, we informed him that we had asked, and that the assistant would not tell us.

The following original Letters from Mrs. HILL BOOTHBY to Dr. JOHNSON were all numbered and labelled by himself, and are bound together in a thin quarto volume.

LETTER I.

“ July 30, 1753.

SIR,

I ASSURE you I esteemed your request to write to and hear from me, as an honour done me, and received your letter with much pleasure : most people, and particularly a lady, would tremble at taking up the pen to reply to a letter from Mr. Johnson ; but I had the pleasure of experiencing so much candour and goodness in the man, that I have no fear of the eminent genius, extensive learning, accurate judgment, and every other

happy talent which distinguish and complete the author. In a correspondence with you, Sir, I am confident I shall be so far from hazarding any thing by a discovery of my literary poverty, that in this view I shall be so much the more a gainer : a desire to be such, will be a motive sufficient to engage your generosity to supply me out of your large stock, as far as I am capable of receiving so high an advantage.

Indeed you greatly overrate my poor capacity to follow the great examples of virtue, which are deeply engraven in my heart. One of the most eminent of these you have seen, and justly admired and loved. It is but a faint ray of that brightness of virtue which shone in her, through every part of her life, which is, as by reflection only, to be seen in me,

her unworthy substitute in the care of her dearest remains.

Let me beg you therefore to give honour to whom honour is due. Treat me as a Friend, dear Sir; exercise the kindest office of one towards me; tell me my faults, and assist me in rectifying them. Do not give me the least reason to doubt your sincerity by any thing that has the air of compliment. Female vanity has, I believe, no small share in the increase of the difficulties you have found in one part of your labours; I mean, that of *explaining* in your Dictionary the *general and popular language*. You should therefore treat this vanity as an enemy, and be very far from throwing any temptation in its way.

I have great obligations to Dr. Laurence and his family. They have

hearts like yours ; and therefore I do not wonder they are partial in judging of me, who have a friendly and grateful heart. You are in the right : I should have been most heinously offended, if you had omitted a particular inquiry after my dear charge. They are all six in perfect health, and can make as much noise as any six children in England. They amply reward all my daily labours for them : the eldest has her dear mother's disposition and capacity. I am enabled to march on steadily with my shattered frame ; how long, I think not of, but chearfully wait for

‘ kind Nature’s signal of retreat’

whenever it pleases God.

I hope, however, to see you the *author of a Great Dictionary* before I go, and to have the pleasure of join-

ing with a whole Nation in your applause: and when you have put into their hands the means of speaking and writing the English language with as much purity and propriety as it is capable of being spoken and wrote, give me leave to recommend to you your future studies and labours—let them all be devoted to the glory of God, to exemplify the true use of all languages and tongues. *The vanity of all human wishes*, you have finely and forcibly proved; what is then left for you, but to seek after certain and permanent happiness, divine and eternal goods,

(These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain,)

and with all the great talents bestowed on you, to call others to the same pursuit? How should I rejoice to see *your pen wholly* employed in

the glorious Christian cause ; inviting all into the ways of pleasantness ; proving and displaying the only paths to peace ! Wherever you have chosen this most interesting subject of Religion in your Ramblers, I have warmly wished you never to chuse any other. You see, Sir, I am much inclined to indulge the liberty you have given me of conversing with you in this way. But I will not please myself longer at the hazard of tiring you. One request, however, I must make ; some of those parts of your life, which, you say, you pass in idleness, pray, for the future, bestow on one who has a great regard for you, will highly value every testimony of your esteem, and is, Sir,

Your much obliged friend
and humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.

My good wishes attend Miss Williams. Mr. Fitzherbert returns you his compliments. We are now at Tissington, near Ashbourn, Derbyshire."

LETTER II.

"Tissington, Dec. 4, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

You might be very sure that something extraordinary and unavoidable must keep me so long silent, to a person whom from every motive I esteem and regard, and consequently love to converse with. I will honestly own to you likewise, that I was extremely pleased with your letter, as one of the prettiest things I ever read in my life, and longed to *praise you* in reply to it, as a proof of my being convinced, that, *as a friend,*

I owed you this honest tribute. But, alas ! all my purposes of writing were prevented ; first, by a series of family engagements and perplexities, which much affected me, and lately, by what, I believe, is in part the consequence of them, sickness. I have a very tender, weak body, and it is next to a miracle it has stood up so long as for seven months without one day's confinement to a room ; but on last Friday sevensnight, a violent fit of the colic seized me, and till yesterday disabled me from going out of my room. I am now, thank God, recovering, and only low, weak, and languid. My dear children have been and are all well, except some trifling colds and little disorders : and for them, nothing is too hard to suffer, too arduous to attempt ! my confidence is strong,

founded on a rock ; and I am assured I shall be supported for them, till it pleases God to raise them up a better helper. O, certainly, I allow a friend may be a comfort, and a great one ; and, I assure you, Dear Sir, your last kind notice of me brought comfort with it, for which I thank you. Please not to mention any thing more of me in Essex Street, or to any, than that various engagements and sickness have made me appear negligent. I am no complainer, but, on the contrary, think every dispensation of Providence a blessing ; enjoy the sweet portion, nor quarrel with the medicinal draught, because it is bitter. What I have hinted to you, of *perplexity*, &c. is in the confidence of friendship.

May all your labours be blest with success ! Excuse my trembling hand,

which cannot do more at present than assure you, I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged
and sincere friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Some acquaintance of mine at a distance will have it that you sometimes write an *Adventurer*; for this reason, because they like some of those papers better than any except the *Ramblers*. I have not seen any. Pray tell me if I must; for, if your pen has any share in them, I shall take it ill to be deprived of the benefit. Be so good as to let me hear from you, when you have leisure."

LETTER III.

"Tissington, Dec. 29, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

You very obligingly say, 'Few are so busy as not to find time to do

what they delight in doing.' That I have been one of those few, my not having, till now, found time to answer your last kind letter, may convince you. My indisposition, and confinement on that account, made it necessary for me to double my application for my little flock; and, as my strength increased, I found occasions to exercise its increase also; so that I really have not had a moment to spare. I know you will be better pleased to infer from hence that my health is much mended, than you would be with the finest and most artful arrangement of abstracted reasoning that ever was penned. I have been a great moralizer; and, perhaps, if all my speculative chains were linked together, they would fill a folio as large as the largest of those many wrote by the

philosophical Duchess of Newcastle, and be just as useful as her labours. But I have wholly given up all attempts of this sort, convinced by experience that they could at most afford only a present relief. The one remedy for all and every kind of sorrow, the deeply-experienced Royal Prophet thus expresses :

‘ In the multitude of sorrows which I had in my heart, *thy* comforts have refreshed my soul.’

The sovereign Balm for every heart-felt
wound

Is only in the HEAVENLY Gilead found ;

Whate'er the sage Philosophers pretend,

Man's wisdom may awhile Man's pain sus-

PEND ;

But can no more—Wisdom DIVINE must
cure,

And Love inspire, which ALL things can
endure.

As I think, I write; and express my thoughts in words that first offer, *sans* premeditation, as you see. As I have told you before, I write to the friend, not to *the* Mr. Johnson who himself writes better than any man. I shall comply with your request, and not inclose this; though at the same time I am conscious I have so little claim to a place among your riches, that a waste-paper drawer will be a much properer one for my poor productions: however, if they have this merit, and you regard them as proofs that I much esteem you, they will answer my purpose, which is that of being regarded as,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate

and sincere friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

My jewels are all well.

One reason for my inclosing my former letters was the not being sure of your right direction, but I hope I have recollected one. You have not answered my question in my last postscript."

LETTER IV.

" Saturday, Feb. 16, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I COULD almost think you had been long silent on purpose that you might make the prettiest reflections on that silence imaginable: but I know you never need auxiliaries; your own powers are on every occasion abundantly sufficient. I come now only, as it were, to call upon you in a hurry; and to tell you I am going to the Bath. So it is determined for me. Lodgings are taken; and on Monday we are

to set out, Mr. Fitzherbert, the two eldest dear ones, and myself. This change of place for six or eight weeks I must notify to you, for fear I should be deprived of a letter of yours a day longer than your own affairs make necessary. If nothing unforeseen prevents, Mrs. Hill Boothby will be found on THE SOUTH PARADE, BATH, by a letter directed there, after the next week; for we shall travel slowly.

I will add a few more words, though I am very busy; and a very few will fully shew my thoughts on MORALITY. The Saviour of the world, Truth itself, says, HE CAME NOT TO DESTROY THE LAW, BUT TO FULFIL IT.

I wonder not at your hesitating to impart a secret to a woman; but am the more obliged to you for communicating it as a secret, after so

hesitating. Such a mark of your deliberate confidence shall be strictly regarded ; and I shall seek for letter T, that I may read with *redoubled* pleasure. I want to know when the GREAT DICTIONARY will prove itself truly so, by appearing. Every thing that relates to Mr. Johnson has the best wishes of a friendly heart ; here I include Mrs. Williams ; and desire she will accept her share, which I am sure she will with pleasure, on account of my being, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

and much obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.

As a friend of yours and Dr. L—'s, and one who seems worthy to be such, I am solicitous to inquire after the health of Dr. Bathurst.

Excuse hurry and its effects ; I mean, my health is very weak, and I have much to do."

LETTER V.

“ Bath, March 11, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

IT is impossible for me not to pay due regard to your kind solicitude for my better health. I shall therefore begin this letter, as you enjoin me, with an account of it, and tell you it really is better. The waters did not agree with me for some days after I began drinking them; but a little medicinal assistant administered by Dr. Hartley has so reconciled us, that for a week past they have been very salutary, given me an appetite, strength to use exercise without fatigue, whole nights of sweet sleep, and, what some people here would even prefer to these, better looks. For all these I am truly thankful to the Giver of all good. You are

doubtful whether I am not hurt by needless anxiety. Be no longer so; but be sure I am not—*sufficient unto the day, is the evil thereof*, is my preservative from all anxious thought for the morrow. I look not forward but to an eternity of peace and joy, and in this view all VAIN solicitude for the things of this life is taken away.

You find pleasure in writing letters, and to ME. I will put a stop to your further inquiry into the cause of this, by most truly assuring you, you give me a very great pleasure in reading your letters. I earnestly wish to be indeed your friend; and as far as I am capable of being such, I beg you always to be certain you are conferring an obligation when you confide in me, or command me. Immediately after I received your last

letter, I tripped to the booksellers for the Gentleman's Magazine* : many masterly strokes in the picture would have made the hand known to me, had not you named it. You will not be displeas'd when I tell you, *one* circumstance drew from me a silent tear, viz. *one of the last acts of reason, &c.* and this melting was part from natural tenderness, part from sympathy. How then can I condemn your sorrow? Yet I must, even because I have myself formerly been overwhelmed with fruitless grief for the loss of a friend; and therefore by miserable experience can warn all

* In the Gentleman's Magazine for February 1753, p. 81, is inserted the thirtieth number of the Adventurer, dated February 17, 1753, which was written by Dr. Johnson. In the same Magazine, the account of the Tragedy of the Gamester seems also to have been written by him.

from splitting on this rock. Fly from it. Many are the resources shewn to fly to; but believe me, there is but one that can avail—religion.

My situation here allows me but a very small portion of time to myself. Mr. Fitzherbert loves company, and has a good deal. I have some acquaintance, and a few friends here, who by turns engage me. Thus, though I never go into the public scenes here, I can seldom be alone: but I was determined to secure half an hour, to thank you, and to tell you, whenever you favour me with your letters, no engagements shall prevent my assuring you, I receive them in every place with the greatest pleasure, and am, and shall be,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Overlook all defects."

Superscribed "To Mr. Johnson,
at his house in Gough Square, Lon-
don."

LETTER VI.

" Bath, April 1, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

THAT you find my health and well-being of consequence enough to be solicitous about, is a consideration so pleasing to me, that it is impossible your inquiries after them should ever be troublesome; and I have so high an opinion of your judgment, that, were I so situated as to consult it properly, and clearly state my questions, no nervous fine lady in Bath can more frequently have recourse to her doctor for advice, than I should have to you for yours in every doubtful point of conduct. The extreme

cold has affected me ; but, on the whole, I am, thank God, better than when I first came to this place ; and so chearful, that those of my acquaintance who think there is no other use for SPIRITS but to ENJOY LIFE IN PUBLIC, to speak in their own style, wonder I do not frequent the rooms, balls, &c. But the dreaming part of my life is over, and all my pursuits are bent towards the securing—

A sober certainty of waking bliss.

I fly from dissipation to serious recollection, a sort of labour which is succeeded by a chearful rest.

Sir Charles Grandison I have not read. The reflection of having thrown away much precious time formerly in useless and unprofitable reading makes me extremely cautious ; and I

am in a bookseller's shop, like a Bee in a garden, which you have seen fly round and round, from flower to flower, nor ever rests on any till it finds one which will yield pure honey. So I just touched Sir Charles Grandison in my examining flight; but, from my instinct, found there was no honey for ME. Yet am I far from saying there may not be *miel tres doux* for other kind of bees. However, I find the few to whose judgement I pay the greatest deference agree with you. Mr. Richardson's intention I honour; but to apply your own words TRULY on this occasion—"The best intention may be troublesome." And perhaps the same way and manner of executing may weary. His mistaking the manners, and life, of those whom you truly say we CONDESCEND to call GREAT

people, is, I think, very pardonable. It would not be worth a Naturalist's while to spend the greatest part of his time in observing the various tinctures a camelion takes from every body it approaches; and yet he must do so, to give a true representation of the colours of its life. You can make the application.

I am intirely of your opinion with regard to education. I will labour all I can to produce plenty. But sanguine hopes will never tempt me to feel the torture of cutting disappointment. I have seen even Pauls plant, and Apollos water in vain, and am convinced God only can give the increase. Mine is a fruitful soil. Miss Fitzherbert is yet every thing I can wish. Her eldest brother, a fine lively boy; but, *entre nous*, too indulgent a father will make it ne-

ecessary for him to be sent to school; the sooner the better. Do you know of any school where a boy of six years old would be taken care of, chiefly as to his morals, and taught English, French, &c. till of a fit age for a public school?

You do not say a word of the Dictionary. Miss Fitzherbert and I are impatient for its publication. I know you will be so indulgent to a friend, as to let me have the pleasure of hearing from you soon. My sincere regard and best wishes will always attend you, as I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged
and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

A rainy day has prevented my drinking the waters, or I should have hazarded the head-ach, rather than have been longer silent."

LETTER VII.

“ Bath, May 20, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

How was I surprized this morning, when, on opening a letter from you, with the pleasing expectation of its being a reply to one I wrote to you above a week ago, I found you kindly complaining of my silence. The reflections you begin your letter with seemed to me, at first, as if you had mistaken in directing it to me, as I well knew I felt, and had very lately expressed, a regard you could not have the least doubt of. The servant assures me he put my letter into the post-box himself. The post-master assures me, none put there ever fail. Yet somehow this has failed. I shall be sorry if it does not reach you, as there were some parts

of it (for it was no short one) wrote with the freedom and confidence of friendship; and the whole sufficient to prove I am never long silent, but from necessity. If this wanderer does at last find you, dear Sir, signify its arrival as soon as possible to me. I would not have any thing lost which would be of the least value to you. But if it is lost, my intention and execution of it will still remain as testimonies for me; and if it is possible any one of *your* friends could give occasion for imputations of inconstancy and unkindness, you may be assured I am, on motives which are invariable,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

We are to leave this place on Tuesday the 28th, and set out for Tissington, where I long to be. I hope to take much better health thither, for the use of my dear little nursery."

LETTER VIII.

"Tissington, June 5, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

The first leisure moment I have, is most justly due to the compliance with your kind request to be informed of our arrival here; and with much pleasure I tell you, that, after a very good journey of four days, we were met with the bloom of health, and the endearing smiles of innocence, last Friday, at Tissington. The sensations of joy and thankfulness I experienced on this interview with

the little creatures are not to be described : but, I am persuaded, no heart but her's who bequeathed them to me, ever so truly owned and received them as children.

The loss of *that* letter I can no way account for—think no more of it. The subject of part of it was my then situation, and some reflections on the exceeding decline of conversation. I observed in general ; in which there seemed to be no other propriety than that of trifling French words to trifling somethings, not worthy of being called *thoughts*. I mentioned *Adventurers*, &c. and expressed, as well as I could, my particular satisfaction in Mr. Johnson's bullion, or rather pure stirling, amidst the tinsel base-mixed stuff I met with, and the high value I set on his letters. I gave you an abstract of Farnsworth's History,

which I have not time to repeat. I thank you for thinking of a school, and recommending one. Your recommendation would immediately fix me, if I *alone* was to determine. Two have been particularly recommended to Mr. Fitzherbert, Fulham and Wandsworth; and we have for some time been making all the inquiry we can into both. The last I have many objections to. I shall be much obliged to you for a more particular account of your friend; as—how many boys he takes—his rules and rates—and also if he has a French and dancing-master. I am strongly biassed towards a man you speak so well of. That—*well instructed in Virtue*, is the thing I want; and a visit from you now and then, to confirm this instruction, is a high inducement. To some proper place I hope I shall

be permitted to take this dear boy this Summer, when I also hope for the pleasure of seeing you. I know it will be a pleasure to you to assist me in an affair of such consequence, on many accounts; and I shall not say any more to Mr. Fitzherbert about Fulham till I hear from you; which, I assure you, I never do without great satisfaction; as I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged
and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Excuse the effects of hurry. I have a cold I brought from Bath; otherwise I am in much better health than I have been for above twelve months past."

LETTER IX.

“ Tissington, July 1, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

TRUTH is my delight: no establishment of custom will, I hope, ever make me deviate from it. And as an excuse seems to me a kind of screen, which has at least the appearance of concealing something we would not have seen, I make none. Nor shall I now say more upon my long silence, than that I have thought and felt it such myself, and from thence leave you to infer that it has been unavoidable. Your last letter was such a one as I expected from *you* on such a subject.—that is, so clear, full, candid, sensible, kind, and friendly, as I hardly ever saw from any other. If I had your talent of expression, I could expatiate on this

letter with great pleasure ; but as I have not, I must deny myself this indulgence, and treasure up those observations I have made for my own use, which if I could in the best manner express, you do not need for yours. I communicated what you said of Mr. Elphinston* to Mr. Fitzherbert, who desires me to say, with his regard to you, that he is much obliged to you, but, upon the whole, Mr. Elphinston is not the person he would chuse. Though Mr. Fitzherbert is no warm

* Mr. James Elphinston, who published various works, was esteemed by Dr. Johnson as a worthy man. He published an edition of the *Ramblers* at Edinburgh, as they appeared on their first publication in London. It is printed in a duodecimo size, with uncommon elegance and great correctness. Mr. Elphinston added translations to the mottos. He afterwards kept a school at Kensington.

party-man, yet, I believe, the *Scotchman* and *Non-juror* would be insuperable objections. Fulham, I think, will be chosen, at least for a time. The hope of your seeing this dear boy sometimes is a comfortable one; thank you for it. His going from home, and at a distance, I am sure you would see the necessity of, could I lay before you the reasons which daily urge me to feel it. Less evils must be submitted to, with the view of avoiding greater. I cannot help, with much pity, regarding a mere fox-hunter as an animal little superior to those he pursues, and dreading every path that seems to lead towards this miserable chace.

My health continues tolerable, thank God; yours, and every other good, I sincerely wish you. If present resolutions hold, I may have the

pleasure of seeing and conversing with you; however, I hope for that of hearing from you. I beg you never to let me lose one of your reflections upon life. Drop them on the paper just as they arise from your mind; I love them, and profit by them; and I am pleased particularly sometimes to find one of my own, brightened and adorned with your strong and masterly colouring, which gives me back the image of my mind, like the meeting an old acquaintance after absence, but extremely improved. I have no reason, I own, to expect a letter from you soon; but think not that, because I have not before now desired one, I do not deserve one, because I can with truth assure you I have this claim. Nobody can more value your cor-

respondence, or be with greater esteem than I am,

Dear Sir,

your friend,

and obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER X.

"Tissington, August 5, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE, as you desired, endeavoured to think about and examine your hypothesis; but this dear little boy, and the change resolved on for him, would not suffer me to speculate in a general way to much purpose. Must you not allow our perception of pain and of pleasure to be in an equal degree? Or does it not often happen, that we are even more sensible to pain than pleasure?

If so; *those changes which do not increase our present happiness, will not enable us to feel the next vicissitude of gladness with quicker*, but only with equal, or with a less degree of perception; and consequently we shall be either no gainers or losers on the whole. And yet, though I am sure I shall experience the truth of this, if I only see you for a few hours, I shall however desire to see you. This is an enigma I will leave to your solution, and proceed to tell you, that, if nothing intervenes to change it, the present resolution is, that we are to set out for Fulham on Wednesday sevensnight, the 14th of August. On account of the dear little ones I shall leave here, I shall be obliged to make a speedy return; and propose staying only a week at a

friend's in Putney, to see every thing fixed, as well as I can, for my young man. But I will contrive to see you and a very few more of my friends in town; and you shall hear from me, as to the *when* and *where*, from Putney. You, full of kindness, sitting in your study, will, I know, say—"Why does she hurry herself about so?"—I answer, to save you the pain of this thought, that travelling always is very serviceable to me, in point of health.

You will never provoke me to contradict you, unless you contradict me, without reasons and exemplification to support your opinion. 'Tis very true—all these things you have enumerated, are equally pitiable with a poor fox-hunter. 'Tis not in man to direct, either his own,

or the way of others aright; nor do I ever look but to the supreme and all-wise Governor of the universe, either for direction, or with hope. I know you kindly mean to avert the pain of disappointment by discouraging expectation; but mine is never sanguine with regard to any thing here. Mine is truly a life of faith, not of sight; and thus I never, as Milton says—

———— bate one jot

Of Heart or Hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward.——

I like not the conclusion of your last letter; it is an ill compliment to call that mean, which the person you speak to most highly esteems and values. Know yourself and me better for the future, and be assured you

both are and ought to be much regarded and honoured by,

Dear Sir,

your grateful

and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Your Dedication to your great Dictionary I have heard of in these words—*A specimen of perfection in the English Language.*”

LETTER XI.

“ Putney, August 9, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

As I promised, this is to inform you of our being here; but at present I cannot say more. The pleasure of seeing you, with the ways and means of procuring this pleasure,

must be deferred for some days. This evening we take dear Billy to school; and till I have seen how he settles there, I am fixed here. Form some little plan for me, to be executed towards the latter end of this week; for really I am not capable of forming any myself at this time—and communicate it by the penny-post in a billet to me at Mrs. D'Aranda's in Putney. I and my little companions here are well, and all has a favourable aspect with regard to the dear boy's situation. I never forget any thing you say; and now have in my mind a very just and useful observation of yours, viz. 'The effect of education is very precarious. But, what can be hoped without it? Though the harvest may be blasted, we must yet cultivate the ground.'

&c. I am, (somewhat abruptly)—
but, I am,

Dear Sir,

your much obliged
and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.”

LETTER XII.

“ Sunday-Evening, Holborn Bridge.

DEAR SIR,

Do you think I would have been almost two days in town without seeing you, if I could either have been at liberty to have made you a visit, or have received one from you? No: you cannot think so unjustly of me. The truth is, I have been in a hurry ever since I came here, and am not well. To-morrow I am obliged to go a little way into the country.

On Tuesday, Doctor Lawrence has engaged me to spend the evening at his house, where I hope to meet you, and fix with you some hour in which to see you again on Wednesday. Thursday, down towards Derbyshire. Thus is whirled about this little machine; which, however, contains a mind unsubject to rotation. Such you will always find it.

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XIII.

" Putney, August 23, 1754.

" DEAR SIR,

UNLESS a very great change is made in you, you can never have the least reason to apprehend the loss of my esteem. Caprice may have accompanied the morning, and perhaps noon of my life, but my even-

ing has banished that fickle wanderer; and as now I fix not without deliberation and well-weighed choice, I am not subject to change.

Your very kind visit was a new obligation; which if I could express my sense of, it must be less. Common favours it is easy to acknowledge; but a delicate sensibility to real proofs of esteem and friendship are not easily to be made known.

Mr. Millar's method seems to me to be a very right one, and for the reasons you give; and if he will please to carry the catalogue to Mr. Whiston, by the time I shall be in town, I imagine he will have appraised the books; and then we will proceed to the disposal of them, as you shall judge best. Mr. Fitzherbert I have not seen since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and therefore cannot yet

say when I can again have that pleasure; but I hope some time next week to repay your visit. I have an aching head to-day, so great an enemy to my inclination, that it will not let me say more than that I am, with much esteem and true regard,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

Mrs. D'Aranda and the young ladies desire compliments. My regards to Miss Williams."

LETTER XIV.

"Tissington, Sept. 12, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I TOLD you I would call upon you before I left London, *if I could*. I much desired to have seen you again; it was in my mind all Thursday; but so it happened, that it was not

in my power. Mr. Fitzherbert having changed his mind and determined not to go to Tunbridge, suddenly took up another resolution, which was to take a house in town, and engaged me to go with him to see one in Cavendish Square, where I was the greatest part of the morning, and met with what took up the rest of the day; besides so much fatigue as would alone have disabled for going out again, after I got to Holborn. But, as we are likely to be in town again the next month, and stay there long, I hope I shall have frequent opportunities of seeing you, both where I shall be, and at your own house. Thank God, we arrived here well on Monday, and found my little dear charge all in perfect health and joy. My brother I shall see next week, and then can fully communi-

cate to him all you was so good as to execute for us in the library affair, and your opinion concerning the disposal of the books. I only saw enough of you in Putney, and in town, to make me wish to see more. It will soon be in your power to gratify this wish. Place is a thing pretty indifferent to me, but London I am least fond of any; however, the conversation of some few in it will soon take off my dislike. I do not mean this as a letter; call it what you will. It is only to tell you why I did not see you again; that I hope a future time will recompense for this loss; that we are safe here; and that every where I am, and shall be, with much esteem, Dear Sir,

your obliged and
affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY,

You can write amidst the tattle of women, because your attention is so strong to sense, that you are deaf to sound. I wonder whether you could write amidst the prattle of children—no better than I, I really believe, if they were your own children, as I find these prattlers are mine.”

LETTER XV.

“Tissington, Sept. 28, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

Do you wait to hear again from me? or why is it that I am so long without the pleasure of hearing from you? Had my brother kept his appointment, I should not have failed to give you a second letter sooner; now is the first moment I could tell you his determination concerning the books. But first I am to give you

His compliments and thanks for your part in the affair. He thinks, as the sum offered by Mr. Whiston is so small a one, and his son is likely to be a scholar; it will be best to suspend any sale of the books for the present; and if, on further consideration, he finds he must part with them, then to do it in the method you proposed; as, that way, some may be selected for his son's use, and the rest sold, so as to make more than to be parted with to a bookseller. Upon considering both sides of the question, he rather chuses the hazard on one side, with the certainty of greater profits in case of success, than to accept of Mr. Whiston's sum for all the books at present. But I am preparing for a journey to town; and there, I hope, I shall have an opportunity of explaining upon this

subject in a clearer manner; for, though I know what I would say, I cannot say it clearly, amidst the confusion of ideas in my head at this time. I beg to hear from you; however little I may deserve, I cannot help much desiring a letter from you. If your taste and judgment cannot allow me any thing as a writer; yet let my merit as a sincere friend demand a return. In this demand I will yield to none; for, I am sure, none can have a truer esteem and friendship towards you, than

Dear Sir,

your obliged and
affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVI.

“ Tuesday, October 29, 1754

DEAR SIR,

FROM what Mrs. Lawrence told me, I have had daily hopes of the pleasure of seeing you here, which has prevented my desiring that favour. I am much mortified by the disappointment of having been so long in town, without one of the greatest satisfactions I promised myself in it—your conversation. And, in short, if you will not come here, I must make you a visit. I should have called upon you before this time, if the settling my dear little charge here had not employed me so much at home; now, that business is almost completed. Pray, say when and where, I may have the pleasure of seeing you. Perhaps you may not imagine how much

I am affected by the not receiving any reply to two letters I wrote before we left Derbyshire, and the being a fortnight in town, without seeing a person whom I highly esteem, and to whom I am,

an obliged and
affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVII.

" Friday-night, Nov. 29,

DEAR SIR,

How particularly unlucky I was to be out to-day, when you came! For above these fourteen days have I never been a moment from home, but closely attending my poor dear Miss Fitzherbert, who has been very ill, and unwillingly left her to-day to pay a debt of civility long due: I

imagined, if you come to-day, it would be about the time of my return home. But, that we may be better acquainted with each other's hours, and I secure against a second mortifying disappointment, I send to tell you, that, not being an evening rapper at people's doors, whenever I do go out, it is in a morning — a town-morning — between noon and three o'clock; and that for the next four mornings I must be out. Now can't you as conveniently let me have the pleasure of seeing you at five some evening? Name any one; and you shall have your tea as I can make it, and a gratification infinitely superior, I know, in your estimation to any other, that of seeing your presence gives great pleasure to a friend; for such I most sincerely am to you,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVIII.

“ DEAR SIR,

I HAVE company, from whom I run, just to say, I have often rejoiced to see your hand, but never so much as now. Come and see me as soon as you can; and I shall forgive an absence which has indeed given me no small disturbance.

I am, dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.”

LETTER XIX.

“ DEAR SIR,

PERHAPS you are the only author in England, who could make a play a very acceptable present to me. But you have; and, I assure you, I shall leave your Irene behind me, when I

go hence, in my little repository of valuable things. Miss Fitzherbert is much delighted, and desires her best thanks. The author's company would have more enhanced the value of the present; but that we will hope for soon. I am much obliged to you for the good account of the Lawrences, and for many things which increase my regard, and confirm me in being,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, Vol. II. p. 321.

"January 1, 1755.

DEAREST MADAM,

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the recep-

tion of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the New Year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to,

Dearest Madam,

your, &c.

From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, Vol. II. p. 392.

“ DEAREST MADAM,

NOBODY but you can recompence me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he

left you ; I concluded, when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write, lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise,

Dearest Madam,
yours, &c."

MRS. BOOTHBY TO DR. JOHNSON.

LETTER XX.

" May 15, 1755,

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HOPED to have seen you here last night, as the Doctor told me he had informed you I was in town again.

It is hard to be suspected of coldness and indifference, at the very time when one is, and with reason, most strongly sensible of the contrary. From your own kind conduct to me; in particular lately, you, who are accustomed to make just inferences and conclusions, might have easily made the true ones, and have discovered, there was too much to be expressed. To a less penetrating person, this might occasion a surprize of neglect; but I could not have imagined you would or could have been so deceived. My friendship is a poor acquisition; but you see, it is so far valuable, that it is firm and constant. Then, you will say, it is not a poor acquisition. Well; be it what it will; be assured you have as far as it can ever extend, either to please or serve you. But do not suspect me.

I have an opportunity just now to send this—therefore no more till I see you; except that I am, indeed with much esteem, gratitude, and affection,

Dear Sir,

your friend,

H. B.

I hope I am better, and Miss F. in a good way. She has the measles.”

LETTER XXI.

“ Tissington, June 15, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

THAT we arrived safe here, and had every thing to make our journey easy and pleasant, is most of what I have time to say, except that, amidst the smiles of the country, a country I love, my native one, and the smiles of my children, whom I love much

more, I am sensible you are an hundred and forty miles distant. This is not like forgetting you. At present I am the worse for the fatigue of travelling; which, contrary to custom, was a great one to me: but I hope this pure, sweet air, will have a great influence upon my health, when I have recovered my fatigue. Your little friend is, I think, the better for her four days exercise. You were the subject of our conversation many times on the road, and will often be so. I hope I shall soon find you think of us. I can never forget the hours you generously bestowed on one who has no claim or merit, but that of being,

Dear Sir,

with much esteem,

your grateful and

affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Miss Fitzherbert's love to you; no small treasure, I assure you."

LETTER XXII.

"Tissington, July 4, 1755.

Two letters from Mr. Johnson! Why did I not reply to the first kind greeting before he answered my letter? I don't love to be outdone in kindness; and I was both angry and pleased, when I saw your second letter, my good friend. But the truth is, I have been lazy. It had been long since I had known what quiet was; and I found in myself, both inwardly and outwardly, a strong inclination to enjoy it. I read your letters over and over; but till now, I could not sit down to write to you. It is true, I am abstracted from common life, as you say. What is com-

mon life, but a repetition of the same things over and over? And is it made up of such things, as a thinking, reflecting being can bear the repetition of, over and over, long, without weariness? I have found not; and therefore my view is turned to the things of that life, which must be begun here, is ever new and increasing, and will be continued eternally hereafter. Yet, mistake me not, I am so far from excluding social duties from this life, that I am sure they are a part of it, and can only be duly and truly exerted in it. Common life, I call not social life; but, in general, that dissipation and wandering which leads from the duties of it. While I was in town, I did not feel myself as a part of that multitude around me. The objects I saw at dinners, &c. *except yourself,*

when they had any of my attention, drew it only to pity their want of attention to what chiefly concerned their happiness; and oftener they were as passing straws on the surface of a Dovedale stream, and went as lightly and as quick, over the surface of my mind. My importance here I wish was greater, if it might please God to grant me another wish, that of making one soul better and happier. I think reputation and dignity have no value, but as far as they may be made means of influencing and leading into virtue and piety. Mankind, of all degrees, are naturally the same: manners differ from different causes, but not men. A miner in Derbyshire, under the appearance of simplicity and honesty, has perhaps more art than the most accomplished statesman. We are all

alike bad, my dear friend, depend upon it, till a change is wrought upon us, not by our own reasoning, but by the same Divine Power, who first created, and pronounced all he had made, *very good*. From this happy state we all plainly fell, and to it can we only be restored by the second Adam, who wrought out a full and complete redemption and restoration for us. Is this enthusiasm? Indeed it is truth: and, I trust, you will some time be sure it is so; and then, and not till then, will you be happy, as I ardently wish you. I am much better. My cough is now nothing, and my voice almost clear. I am weak yet, too weak to attempt to see Dovedale. But keep your resolution, and come and see us; and I hope I shall be able to walk there with you. I give you

leave to fear the loss of me, but doubt not in the least of my affection and friendship ; this I cannot forgive. Miss Fitzherbert says, she does not forget her promise. She is studying your *Ramblers* to form her style, and hopes soon to give you a specimen of good writing. She is very well, and flying about the fields every fair day, as the rest are.

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. I love your letters, and always rejoice to find myself in your thoughts. You are very frequently in mine ; and seldom without a petition to Heaven for you. Poor is that love, which is bounded by the narrow space of this temporal scene ; mine extends to an eternity ; and I cannot desire any thing less for you, for whom I have the sincerest regard,

than endless happiness; as a proof that I am truly,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

The great Dictionary is placed in full view, on a desk in my own room. I am sorry you have met with some disappointments in the next edition. Best wishes to Miss Williams.

Do not say you have heard from me at the good Doctor's. I should write to him, but have laid out all my present stock of time on you. O—chaises and such things are only transient disquiets. I have, on a fine still day, observed the water, as smooth as glass, suddenly curled on the surface by a little gust of air, and presently still and smooth again. No

more than this are my *chaise troubles*.
Like Hamlet's Ghost, 'Tis here—'tis
gone."

LETTER XXIII.

"Tissington, July 23, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

To answer your questions—I *can* say that I love your letters, because it is very true that I do love them; and I do not know any one reason why I may not declare this truth; so much do I think it would be for my reputation, that I should chuse to declare it, not only to you, but to all who know you. Ask yourself, why I value your affection; for you cannot be so much a stranger to yourself, as not to know many reasons why I *ought highly* to value it; and I hope you are not so much a stranger

to me, as not to know I would always do as I ought, though, perhaps, in this case, the doing so has not the merit of volition — for in truth, I cannot help it. So much in reply to the two first sentences in your last letter. It is no unpleasing circumstance to me, that the same messenger who has taken a letter to the post-house at Ashbourn from me to you, has twice brought back one from you to me. Possibly, while I am now replying to your last, you may be giving me a reply to mine again. Both ways I shall be pleased, whether I happen to be beforehand with you, or you again with me.

I am desirous that, in the great and one thing necessary, you should think as I do; and I am persuaded you some time will. I will not enter into a controversy with you. I am

sure I never can this way convince you in any point wherein we may differ; nor can any mortal convince me, by human arguments, that there is not a divine evidence for divine truths. Such the Apostle plainly defines Faith to be, when he tells us, it is *'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'* Human testimony can go no farther than things seen, and visible to the senses. Divine and spiritual things are far above—and what says St. Paul?—*'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God?'* Do, read the whole chapter; and, if you please, Mr. Romaine's Sermon, or Discourse, lately published, *on the benefit, which the Holy Spirit of God is of to man in his journey through*

life. I utterly disclaim all faith that does not work by love, love that—

— Takes every creature in of every kind ;

and believe, from my soul, that in every sect and denomination of Christians there are numbers, great numbers, who will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the promise, you quote, be gloriously fulfilled. I believe, and rejoice, in this assurance of happiness for ten thousand times ten thousand, thousand, &c. of every language and nation and people. I am convinced that many true Christians differ ; and if such do differ, it can be only in words, with regard to which great caution should be used.

I continue as well in health as I told you I was in my last. Mr. Fitzherbert has put off his coming

here till August. My dear Miss is very well. She bids me send you her love, and tell you, she must consider some time about writing to you before she can execute properly.

Do not treat me with so much deference. I have no claim to it; and, from a friend, it looks too like ceremony—a thing I am at this time more particularly embarrassed with. Perhaps you never knew a person less apt to take offence than myself; and if it was otherwise in general, I am sure you would not have cause to apprehend the giving it, but would always be a particular exception to my taking it.

See how far the pleasure of conversing with you has overcome my present dislike to writing; and let it

be a farther proof to you of my being,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,
and obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY*.

How does Miss Williams and her father? My regards to her."

LETTER XXIV.

" Tissington, July 29, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

As it happened, your rebuke for my silence was so timed as to give me pleasure. Your complaints would have been very painful to me, had I not been pretty certain that before I read them you would receive a letter, which would take away all cause for

* At the end of this letter Dr. Johnson wrote, *Answered.*

them. I could not have borne them under the least consciousness of having merited them. But, quite free from this, such marks of your friendship were very pleasing. *You* need not make use of any arguments to persuade me of the necessity of frequent writing; I am very willing to acknowledge it in a correspondence with you; though I never so little liked to write, in general, since I could write, as for some time past. Both my mind and body are much indisposed to this employment. The last is not so easy in the posture which habit has fixed, when I write, and consequently the mind affected too. To you I always wish to appear in the best light; but you will excuse infirmities; and to purchase your letters I shall think my time happily bestowed. If but one line.

can give you pleasure or suspend pain, I shall rejoice. How kind was your last little letter! I longed to return my immediate thanks: but Mr. Fitzherbert's mother, an old lady, bigoted to forms, prevented me; and has prevented me till now. She came here, is here, and stays some time. I continue much better in my health, thank God, alert and chearful; and have stood storms and tempests, rain and cold, unhurt. I observe the good Doctor's rules, and have found them efficacious. Mr. Fitzherbert had appointed his time for being here as next week, but has changed it to near three weeks hence. Tell me some literary news—I mean, of your own; for I am very indifferent to the productions of others, but interested warmly in all yours, both in heart and mind.

I hope our difference is only in words, or that in time our sentiments will be so much the same, as to make our expressions clear and plain. As you say, every moment brings the time nearer in which we must think alike. O may this time (or rather end of time to us) which will fully disclose truth, also with it disclose eternal happiness to us! You see, I cannot help praying for you, nor shall I ever, as I am, truly,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

My little flock all well; Miss much at your service, and has a high regard for you. If you mention me at the Doctor's, mention me as one who is always glad of paying regard there, and hearing well of them."

LETTER XXV.

" July 30, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

WHY, my good friend, you are so bountiful and so kind, that I must thank you, and say, I am truly grateful, though I have not time for more, as I have been obliged to write several letters to-day, and cannot easily write much. Your account of Mr. Williams's departure was very sweet to me. He is happy without doubt, and, instead of condoling with, I most heartily rejoice with Miss Williams, from this assurance, which I trust she has as strongly as I, and then she must be every moment thankful.

I am not so well as I have been. The damp weather has affected me. But my dear children are all well; and some sunshine will revive me

again. This is only to let you see I think of you, and, as I ought, receive every instance of your regard, when I assure you it increases mine, and makes me more and more,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and
affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

I will tell you some time what I think of Anacreon."

LETTER XXVI.

" August 13, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

You was at Oxford then?—And I was vain enough to conclude you was not in town, or I should have heard from you sooner, and you have not lessened my vanity by thinking of and writing to *me*, in a place where

so many objects suited to your taste would be courting your attention—so many of the learned seeking your conversation. This is a new obligation, of which I am very sensible. Yet I had rather seen a letter, dated from Lichfield, because then I should have hoped soon to see Mr. Johnson himself, and for an opportunity of conversing with him.

I am at present preparing to receive Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne, Mr. Gernier, &c. If you have been in town this week, probably you have seen Mr. Fitzherbert. I hope he would not neglect to inquire after the most valuable acquaintance he has there. Our scene here will be much changed. But all is, and ought to be, variable in this life; and I expect the change with much inward tranquillity. The in-

terval of rest and quiet I have had, has greatly contributed to the amendment of my health. I walked a mile yesterday, without great fatigue; and hope I shall be able to support the labours to come. I am not careful, however, for the morrow. That is in the hands of the almighty and all-merciful God. There I trust; and pray—Give me *this* day my daily bread.

Miss is still *tuning*—no wonder that you have inspired *her* with awe. She is disturbed she does not write; yet cannot satisfy herself with any mental composition. She has yet been working for you. I leave her to herself, and hope she will produce something.

Remember that, the more people I see, the more I shall rejoice in a letter from you. Turtle-feasts, and

venison-feasts, I delight not in. Treat me sometimes, as often as you can, with what will be really a feast ; and in the best manner I am able I will thank you, and be ever, as now,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and
affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXVII.

" Tissington, August 20, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

EVERYWHERE I find myself in your thoughts—at Oxford—in town. How shall I reward this kind attention to a friend; this tender solicitude for her health and welfare? Your partiality will, I know, make you reply, 'by neglecting no means to procure and preserve them.' This is

what I am sensible I owe to the most inconsiderable creature whom it pleases a good Providence to benefit in the last degree by me; and much more to a friend. Pain and sickness do most certainly produce the consequences you observe; and often do I reflect with the greatest wonder and gratitude on all those various occasions in which it has pleased God to visit me with these, that he should never leave me without that *medicine of life—a friend*.

I am glad you saw Mr. Fitzherbert, and that he repeated his invitation to Tissington. He and his company arrived here on Thursday last, all at a loss what to do with themselves in *still life*. They set out yesterday to Derby race, and return on Friday, with some forty more people, to eat a turtle; weight, an hundred and

thirty. This feast, I, who, you know, love eating, am preparing for them. It will be a day of fatigue. But then how sweet and comfortable it will be; to lie down and rest at night! The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eateth little or much. My business is to prepare a feast, not to eat. During the time of our having been here alone, I have found great good from rest and quiet, and the strength gained in this interval of repose enables me to support the hurry of company, and the necessary cares for their reception and entertainment, much better than I could do for a long time before I left London. But I am not so well as I was a fortnight since. The pain in my side is increased, as I find it will be on all occasions where I am obliged to prolong exercise to the least de-

gree of fatigue, and in my present situation there is no avoiding these sometimes. But I have respite seasonably, thank God, as now. And next week Mr. Fitzherbert and his guests go to dance at Buxton, and see the Peak. You will perhaps think a tour round the Peak would be no bad thing for me ; and I should think so too, but as this will be ordered, or *disordered*, by the uncertainty and irregularity of the directors, it will be a rash attempt for me, and, besides, they have only vehicles sufficient for themselves ; so that I shall have another resting time, before they return again to stay a few days ; and then they all go to Lichfield race, from whence Mr. Fitzherbert and Gernier only return back. Now, I have not only told you the state of my health, but of

affairs here, that you may know both how I do, and what I do.

And, while I am writing all this, I really feel ashamed; conscious how little I merit to be thought of consequence enough for any body to desire such information concerning me, particularly you, who I am persuaded, might select a friend among the most worthy. Do not call this feigned humility, or, in other words, the worst sort of pride. 'Tis truth, I assure you.

Will you come into Derbyshire? But why do I ask? You say you will. In the mean time, I will endeavour, with God's blessing, to lay in a stock of health, that I may have the pleasure of walking with you in Dovedale, and many other pleasures I hope for.

You desire longer letters ; here you have one—but such a one as I am afraid will not make you repeat that desire. However, it will be a proof of my willingness to gratify your request whenever it is in my power, and that I never say little to Mr. Johnson by choice, but when I can hear him talk.

The least degree of your quiet is a treasure which I shall take the utmost care of—but yet, from very certain experience, and the truest regard to your peace, I must advise to take it out of all human hands. Young's experience strongly speaks with mine—

Lean not on Earth; 'twill pierce thee to the
heart ;

A broken reed, at best ; but oft a spear ;
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope
expires.

Yet such has been the amazing mercy of God to me, that now I can say—
'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' Looking over some old papers lately, I found two lines I had scratched out, which were prophetic of what has since happened to me—

Variety of pain *will* make me know,
That greatest bliss is drawn from greatest
woe.—

But this, perhaps, you say, is far from being a dissuasive. Why, as to the event here, 'tis indeed the contrary. But, in general, the disappointment and pain is certain, the event not so. There is no peace but that ONE, which the Prince of Peace, king of *Salem*, left to his disciples—
'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world

giveth, give I unto you.' No—for in another place, our Saviour says—
'In the world ye shall have tribulation'—Seek, and you will surely find. You do me the honour to *call* me your *monitress*; and you see I endeavour to execute the duty of one. Peace and happiness here and for ever, do I most ardently wish you; as I am truly,

Dear Sir,

your greatly obliged
and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Miss's love.

N. B. I intended to have concluded this, where I talked of a longer letter on the other side, but went on imperceptibly as it were. Remember you are a whole sheet in my debt after you receive this."

LETTER XXVIII.

" September 8, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

It is as impossible for me to forbear writing, as it is to say a tenth part of what I would say. Two letters I have from you demand a vast deal; yet not more than I am willing to give, was I able; but Mr. Fitzherbert has been at home above a week, and company, &c. have prevented my doing any thing but attend to domestic employments. I do not allow you to be a judge with regard to your conferring obligations. I am to judge and estimate in this case. But, now you know my thoughts, if the repetition displeases, I shall avoid it.

Your letters are indeed very different from the *common dialect of daily*

correspondence, and as different from the style of a *school-dogmatist*. Much sense in few and well-chosen words. Daily correspondence does not *commonly* afford, nor a school-dogmatist, delicate praise. So much for your letters. As to what you say of mine, dear Sir, if they please you, I am perfectly satisfied. And, high as I rate your judgment, it gives me more pleasure to think I owe much of your applause to the partiality of a kind friend, than I should receive from unbiassed criticism; were it publicly to pronounce me superior to all the Arinda's, Sevigné's, &c. in epistolary excellence.

I have been fourteen miles to-day, was out by eight in the morning; (some hours before your day begins), dispatched several important things, am tired, but could not suffer ano-

ther post to go without an assurance
that I am,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,
and obliged one too;

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXIX.

" Tissington, Sept. 20, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

WERE I at liberty, it would not
be in my power to inhance the value
of my letters by their scarcity. You
should have them, till you cried out
' Hold your hand.' But you cannot
imagine the half of what I have to
do ; and I assure you, I have on
your account put off writing to others
from time to time, till now I am
ashamed. Be silent at Dr. Law-

rence's as to me, for I have been long in debt there: I intended to have paid to-day, but you won't let me. This way I consider—' I must go to Derby on Monday, to stay some days—no writing then—and, therefore, I must write to Mr. Johnson now, and defer the rest—why I *must* write to Mr. Johnson, rather than to others, he may find out.'—

You do not pity me, when I am whirled round by a succession of company; yet you are anxious for my health. Now this is, though perhaps unknown to you, really a contradiction. For one day's crowd, with the preceding necessary preparations to receive them, the *honours*, as it is called, of a large table, with the noise, &c. attending, pulls down my feeble frame more than any thing you can imagine. To that, air, gen-

tle exercise, and then quiet and rest, are most friendly. You have often declared you cannot be alone; and I, as often, that I could not *be* long, unless I was some hours in every day alone. I have found myself mistaken; for yet I am in being, though for some time past I have seldom had one half hour in a day to myself; and I have learned this profitable lesson, that resignation is better than indulgence; and, time is too precious a thing for me to have at my own disposal. Providence has given it to others, and, if it may profit them, I shall rejoice. It is all I desire.

I can only be sorry that the text in the Corinthians does not prove to you what I would have it, and add to my prayers for you that it may prove it.

Miss Fitzherbert is very well, and all my dear flock. She sends love to you.

You will prolong your visit to this part of the world, till some of us are so tired of it that we shall be moving towards you. Consider, it is almost October. When do you publish? Any news relating to you will be acceptable; if it is good, I shall rejoice; if not, hope to lessen any pain it may give you by the sharing it, as,

Dear Sir,

your truly affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXX.

"Tissington, October 11, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE been so great a rambler lately, that I have not had time to

write. A week at Derby; another between Stafford and some other relations. The hurrying about proved too much for my strength, and disordered me a good deal; but now, thank God, I am better again. Your letter I met here, as I always do every one you write, with much pleasure. I expected this pleasure; and as I should have met disappointment if I had not had a letter, so the pleasure of one was increased. Few things can disappoint me; I look for no satisfaction from them; but you may greatly, as you have given me a confidence in your highly-valued friendship. Complaints for want of time will be one of those which must be made by all, whose hope is not full of immortality: and to this, the previous review of life, and reflections you have made, are

necessary. I am persuaded you had not time to say more, or you could not have concluded your last as you did. A moment's reflection would have prevented a needless wish.

Have you read Mr. Law? not cursorily, but with attention? I wish you would consider him; '*His appeal to all that doubt, &c.*' I think the most clear of all his later writings; and, in recommending it to you, I shall say no more or less than what you will see he says in his *Advertisement to the Reader*.

In less than a month we are to be in Cavendish-square. Mr. Fitzherbert has fixed Friday sennight for going to town himself, and we are to follow soon after that time. Need I say, I shall be glad to see you? No—you know I shall; and, unless duty calls to Lichfield, I wish rather to

have that visit deferred, till it may give me an opportunity of seeing you here on our return in the Summer. Consider of this, and contrive so, if possible, as that both in Summer and Winter I may have the pleasure of your conversation; which will greatly cheer the gloom of one season, and add to the smiles of the other. Such influence has *such* a friend on,

Dear Sir,

your obliged and
affectionate humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.

My dear Miss Fitzherbert is well, very well, and has never given me one alarm since we came here. She sends you her love very sincerely."

LETTER XXXI.

“ Sunday Night *.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM in trouble about you ; and the more, as I am not able to see how you do myself—pray send me word. You have my sincere prayers ; and the first moment I can, you shall see,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

I beg you would be governed by the good Doctor while you are sick ; when you are well, do as you please.”

* In Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, “ December, 1755.”

LETTER XXXII.

“ MY DEAR SIR *,

WOULD I was able to reply fully to both your kind letters ! but at present I am not. I trust we shall both be better soon, with a blessing upon our good Doctor's means. I have been, as he can tell you, all obedience. As an answer to one part of your letter, I have sent you a little book. God bless you. I must defer the rest, till I am more able.

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Give Cooper some tickets.

I am glad you sent for the hock. Mr. Fitzherbert has named it more than once.

* In Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, "December, 1755;" although it seems to be an answer to the next, written by him.

Thank you for saving me from what indeed might have greatly hurt me, had I heard or seen in a paper such a ———.

DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

From Mrs. Piozzi's "Letters to and from Dr. Samuel Johnson," Vol. II. p. 393.

"December 30, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,

IT is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to

some sudden succession of cold to heat ; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of the fallaciousness of hope and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof ; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something, and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation ; and made me consider all that I had promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life ; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness, a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and

calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realised by execution.

Continue, my dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me, what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it.

The Doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunc-

tions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it. I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which, for me, is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument, 'I think; therefore I am.' It is as good a consequence, 'I write; therefore I am alive.' I might give another, 'I am alive; therefore I love Miss Boothby;' but that I hope our friendship

may be of far longer duration than life. I am,

Dearest Madam,
with sincere affection,
Yours, &c."

TO THE SAME.

" December 31.

MY SWEET ANGEL,

I HAVE read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes, I know not. You ought not to be offended; I am perhaps as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I de-

sire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what was in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to show it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new, except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines.

I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear Angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better ; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner ; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse ; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the Doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin; or less, if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces; but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes. Has the Doctor mentioned the bark? In powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and ho-

nour you ; and am very unwilling to lose you.

A Dieu je vous recommande.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

TO THE SAME.

“ Saturday.

DEAREST DEAR,

I am extremely obliged to you for the kindness of your inquiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came, and would have given some oil and sugar, but I took rhenish and water, and recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sleep ill. I have been visited by another Doctor today ; but I laughed at his balsam of Peru. I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and felt nei-

ther hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and found little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more sleep than if my dearest lady were angry at,
 Madam, your, &c.

TO THE SAME.

“ January 8, 1756.

HONOURED MADAM,

I BEG of you to endeavour to live. I have returned your *Law*; which, however, I earnestly entreat you to give me. I am in great trouble; if you can write three words to me, be pleased to do it. I am afraid to say much, and cannot say nothing when my dearest is in danger.

The all-merciful God have mercy on you! I am, Madam,

Your, &c.”

[Miss Boothby died January 16, 1756 ; upon whose death Dr. Johnson composed the following prayer. “ Prayers and Meditations,” &c. p. 25.]

HILL BOOTHBY'S Death. Jan. 1756.

O Lord God, Almighty disposer of all things, in whose hands are life and death, who givest comforts and takest them away, I return thee thanks for the good example of Hill Boothby, whom thou hast now taken away ; and implore thy grace, that I may improve the opportunity of instruction which thou hast afforded me, by the knowledge of her life, and by the sense of her death ; that I may consider the uncertainty of my present state, and apply myself ear-

nestly to the duties which thou hast set before me, that, living in thy fear, I may die in thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I commend, &c. W. and H. B.

[Transcribed June 26, 1768.]

The following Epitaph, upon Miss Hill Boothby, was written by the present Sir Brooke Boothby.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

HILL BOOTHBY,

Only Daughter of BROOKE BOOTHBY and
ELIZABETH FITZHERBERT,

Born Oct. 27, 1708; died Jan. 16, 1756.

COULD beauty, learning, talents, virtue,
save

From the dark confines of th' insatiate grave,
This frail memorial had not ask'd a tear,
O'er Hill's cold relics, sadly mouldering here.
Friendship's chaste flame her ardent bosom
fir'd,

And bright Religion's all her soul inspir'd ;
Her soul, too heavenly for an house of clay,
Soon wore its earth-built fabrick to decay ;
In the last struggles of departing breath,
She saw her Saviour gild the bed of death ;

Heard his mild accents, tun'd to peace and
love,

Give glorious welcome to the realms above ;

In those bright regions, that celestial shore,

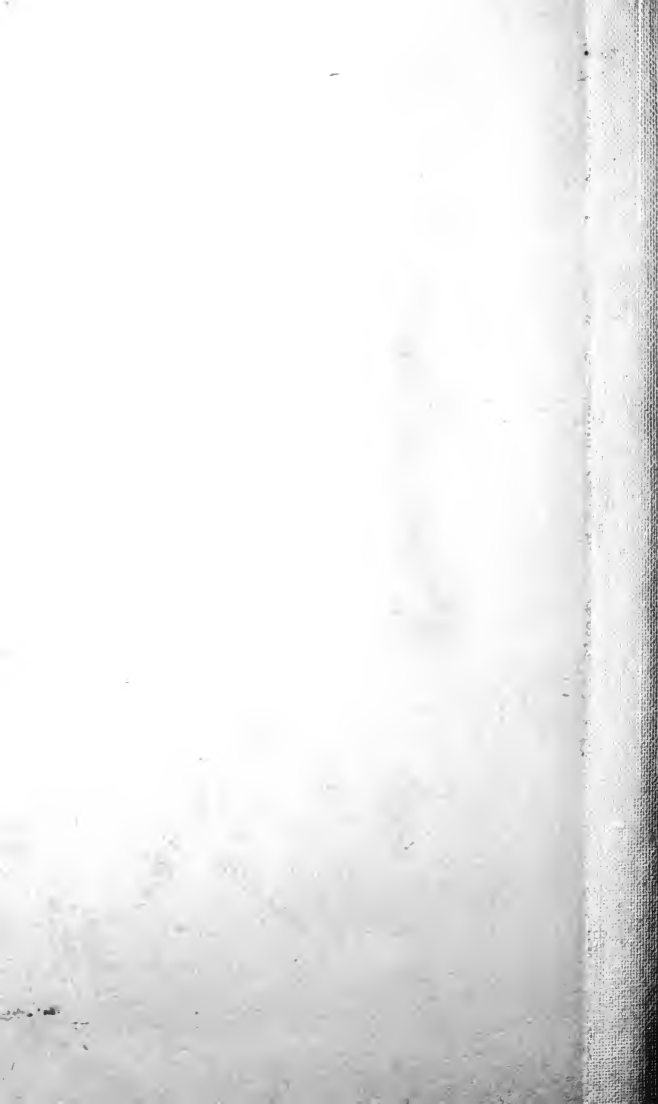
Where friends long-lost shall meet to part no
more ;

“ Blest Lord, I come !” my hopes have not
been vain :

Upon her lifeless cheek extatic smiles remain.







PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

PR
3533
A3
1805

Johnson, Samuel
An account of the life of
Dr. Samuel Johnson

